

# Water Quality Control Board

## North Coast Region

### Executive Officer's Report

March 2003

#### ***CLEANUPS AND SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION***

##### **Lagoon Creek Day Use Area Closure**

[Staff Contact: Lisa Bernard]

On April 3, 2003 Regional Water Board staff notified Redwood National and State Parks Superintendent Andy Ringgold, of contamination detected in a sediment sample collected from the Lagoon Creek Day Use Area pond by a consultant investigating a former lumber mill site in Crescent City. The sediment sample was collected from the Lagoon Creek Day Use Area pond for the intended purpose of representing naturally occurring background conditions in the area. Unbeknown to the investigators, the Lagoon Creek Day Use Area is the location of a former mill site. Results from the single sediment sample indicated the presence of elevated concentrations of wood treatment and related chemicals. Specifically, concentrations of pentachlorophenol at 120 ug/kg (ppb), 2,3,4,5-tetrachlorophenol at 46 ppb, and a total equivalence quotient for dioxin of 438 ng/kg (ppt) were reported in the sample collected from 4 inches below the sediment surface.

The Lagoon Creek Day Use Area is a former mill site adjacent to Highway 101 just north of Klamath. The popular day use area is also used for fishing and hiking. Superintendent Ringgold announced the temporary closure

of the Lagoon Creek Day Use Area on April 4, 2003 as a precautionary measure after receiving the report of hazardous materials contamination at the site. Fish from the pond have not yet been tested and Ringgold also recommended as a safety precaution that individuals who have refrigerated or frozen fish taken from this pond should dispose of them promptly. Persons with health-related questions or concerns have been directed to the Del Norte County Environmental Health Department or their personal physician.



Photo from The Daily Triplicate, April 5, 2003

Regional Water Board staff is working closely with Park staff to gather more information and make plans for a site assessment. Based on the preliminary data, Regional Water Board staff requested submittal of a Preliminary Assessment Report. The information presented

in the Preliminary Assessment Report will be used for subsequent development of a Site Investigation workplan. The Park staff has taken a very conservative approach in the interest of protecting public health and safety until able to confirm the extent and severity of the contamination.

#### ***WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION***

#### **Municipal Storm Water Permit for Small and Medium Municipalities**

[Staff Contact: John Short]

Federal regulations require that discharges of storm water from some small and medium municipalities obtain NPDES permits and develop programs to reduce the discharge of pollutants in storm water runoff to the Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP). The regulations required that federally identified municipalities (six in the North Coast Region) submit applications by March 10, 2003. Regional Water Board staff received applications from all six municipalities on or before the deadline. Staff reviewed the applications and found that three were incomplete due to inadequate Storm Water Management Plans (SWMP). These applicants were notified and staff are working with these cities to improve their SWMPs. Other municipalities in Region 1 have been designated by the state for storm water permitting. These municipalities are required to submit applications within 180 days of receiving notification from the state.

Staff at the State Water Resources Control Board have prepared a statewide General Permit to address the permitting needs of these identified municipalities. Adoption of the General Permit was delayed due to a recent federal court decision. A revised permit is scheduled for adoption by the State Water Board on April 30, 2003. One change to the permit language (and the topic of the court decision) involves the review of the municipal applications. The permit allows for the public to review approved applications (including the SWMP) and challenge their approval. If significant comments are received, staff are

required schedule a hearing before the Regional Water Board for determination of adequacy.

#### **Septic System Issues in Mendocino County**

[Staff Contact: John

Short]

Over the past year, North Coast Regional Water Board staff have been meeting with representatives of Mendocino County to discuss issues regarding potential problems with the handling of septic tank pumpings (septage) from the County. On January 17, 2003, staff attended a septage management workshop in Willits. The workshop was organized by the Mendocino County Department of Environmental Health in response the unexpected temporary closure of the Hay Septage Site in Point Arena and the announcement that the City of Ukiah would be temporarily discontinuing septage disposal at its wastewater treatment facility . These closures put a severe strain on local septage haulers and the communities they serve, and highlighted the shortcomings of the existing septage handling and management practices in Mendocino County. The workshop brought together federal, state and local regulators, septage haulers and disposal site operators to identify potential problem areas, and to develop a strategy to improve septage handling service in the future. A report summarizing the findings and recommendations from the workshop is expected by the end of April. Staff have identified that the lack of reliable septage handling facilities is a major potential source of water quality impairment in the North Coast Region and remain committed to the County's effort to address the issue.

#### **TIMBER HARVEST ACTIVITIES**

During the month of March 2003 the Timber Harvest Division received 23 new Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) and one amendment to

THPs. Staff participated in First Review meetings for 15 THPs and participated in Second Review meetings for nine THPs. Fourteen inspections were also conducted during March 2003.

NOTE: This is a snap shot of a working database with data entered as of April 23, 2003.

## **CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDERS**

There was one Cleanup and Abatement Order issued during the month of March 2003. The Cleanup and Abatement Order was issued to Nautical Heights, LLC; Nautical Heights Subdivision for storm water violations.

## **NOTICE OF VIOLATIONS**

During the month of March 2003 four Notices of Violation (NOV) were issued. NOVs were issued to Odd Fellows Recreation Club; Rio Lindo Academy; Standard Structures, Inc.; and USACOE, Liberty Glen Campground. All the NOVs were issued for failure to submit monthly monitoring reports.

## **CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTION 13267 LETTER ORDERS**

There were four California Water Code section 13267(b) letter Orders issued during the month of March 2003. One was issued to Beaver Lumber Company (former), 1220 Fifth Street, Arcata, for investigations of petroleum hydrocarbon discharges at the site. Two letter orders were issued to Pacific Lumber Company requesting technical reports for the Elk and Freshwater Watersheds. One letter order was issued to Mendocino County Solid Waste Division, Laytonville SWDS.

## **SPILLS, COMPLAINTS, AND INVESTIGATIONS**

Five complaints were received during the month of March 2003. There was one spill reported during the month of March 2003.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINTS/ORDERS**

One Administrative Civil Liability was amended during the month of March 2003. Complaint No. R1-2002-0054 issued to Fairhaven Power Company was amended with Complaint No. R1-2002-0054A. The Complaint includes violations of the site's Waste Discharge Requirements. The amount of the original Complaint was \$19,000 and the revised amount is \$80,000 to be paid incrementally as specified in the Amended Complaint.

## **UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND PROGRAM**

For the month of March 2003, there has been a total of \$1,060,629 in funds issued to tank owners in Region 1 from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund. There were two (2) letters of commitment issued during the month of March 2003.

## **CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATIONS**

Twelve new applications for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification were received in March 2003. Four 401 Certifications were issued in March 2003.

Information regarding all proposed certifications is available at our Internet web site at:

[http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/Public\\_Notices/401certs/notice401.html](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/Public_Notices/401certs/notice401.html)

## **PUBLIC FILE REVIEW**

From February 1 through March 31, 2003, two written requests were made for review of the Regional Water Board's records. In addition, a total of 34 people came into the office and requested file review during the month of March 2003.

## **JUNE REGIONAL WATER BOARD MEETING**

On June 26, 2003 the North Coast Regional Water Board will hold its Public Meeting at the Regional Water Board Hearing Room, 5550 Skylane Boulevard, Suite A; Santa Rosa, California

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web-site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>.